

Dear Parent/Guardian:

We are pleased to inform you that all children attending [Name of School] will receive meals at no charge during school year [Enter school year] unless otherwise notified. Providing meals to children is a growing challenge and requires our taking advantage of all available funding resources. One of these resources is the reimbursement program for free and reduced-price meal benefits from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

So that we can keep our costs low and provide excellent food service for children, we need some information for USDA reimbursement purposes. Your cooperation is appreciated. If your households' income is at or below the level shown on the Federal Income Chart located on the back of the attached income application, please answer all questions on the income application form. An income application which does not contain the requested information cannot be processed by the school.

1. Do I need to fill out an application for each child? No. Complete the application to apply for free or reduced price meals. Use one Free and Reduced Price School Meals Application for all students in your household. We cannot approve an application that is not complete, so be sure to fill out all required information. **Return the completed application to: [name, address, phone number].**

2. Who can get free meals? Children in households getting Food Stamps or Cash Assistance (CA) or FDPIR and most foster children can get free meals regardless of your income. Also, your children can get free price meals if your household income is within the free limits on the Federal Income Guidelines.

3. Can homeless, runaway and migrant children get free meals? Please call [school, homeless liaison or migrant coordinator] to see if your child(ren) qualify, if you have not been informed that they will get free meals.

4. Who can get reduced price meals? Your children can get low cost meals if your household income is within the reduced price limits on the Federal Income Chart, shown on this application.

5. Should I fill out an application if I got a letter this school year saying my children are approved for free or reduced price meals? Please read the letter you got carefully and follow the instructions. Call the school at [phone number] if you have questions.

6. I get WIC. Can my child(ren) get free meals? Children in households participating in WIC may be eligible for free or reduced price meals. Please fill out an application.

7. Will the information I give be checked? Yes, we may ask you to send written proof.

8. If I don't qualify now, may I apply later? Yes. You may apply at any time during the school year if your household size goes up, income goes down, or if you start getting Food Stamps, CA or FDPIR or other benefits. If you lose your job, your children may be able to get free or reduced price meals.

9. What if I disagree with the school's decision about my application? You should talk to school officials. You also may ask for a hearing by calling or writing to: [name, address, phone number].

10. May I apply if someone in my household is not a U.S. citizen? Yes. You or your child(ren) do not have to be a U.S. citizen to qualify for free or reduced price meals.

11. Who should I include as members of my household? You must include all people living in your household, related or not (such as grandparents, other relatives, or friends). You must include yourself and all children who live with you.

12. What if my income is not always the same? List the amount that you normally get. For example, if you normally get \$1000 each month, but you missed some work last month and only got \$900, put down that you get \$1000 per month. If you normally get overtime, include it, but not if you get it only sometimes.

13. We are in the military, do we include our housing allowance as income? If your housing is part of the Military Housing Privatization Initiative, do not include your housing allowance as income. All other allowances must be included in your gross income.

If you have other questions or need help, call [phone number].

Si necesita ayuda, por favor llame al teléfono: [phone number].

Si vous voudriez d'aide, contactez nous au numero: [phone number].

Sincerely,
[signature]

INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLYING

If your household gets FOOD STAMPS OR Cash Assistance (CA) OR FDPIR, follow these instructions:

Part 1: List child(ren)'s name, school, and grade.

Part 2: List Food Stamp or CA or FDPIR case number next to each student's name.

Part 3: Check the appropriate box, if any.

Part 4: Skip this part.

Part 5: Skip this part.

Part 6: Sign the form. A Social Security Number is not necessary.

Part 7: Answer this question if you choose to.

**Check the appropriate box and contact [your school, homeless liaison, migrant coordinator].
Fill out application by following instructions for ALL OTHER HOUSEHOLDS.**

If you are applying for a FOSTER CHILD, follow these instructions:

Part 1: Use a separate application for each foster child. List the child's name, school, and grade.

Part 2: Skip this part.

Part 3: Skip this part.

Part 4: Check the box and list the child's personal use monthly income, if any.

Part 5: Skip this part.

Part 6: Sign the form. A Social Security Number is not necessary.

Part 7: Answer this question if you choose to.

ALL OTHER HOUSEHOLDS, including WIC households, follow these instructions:

Part 1: List each child's name, school, and grade.

Part 2: Skip this part.

Part 3: Check the appropriate box, if any.

Part 4: Skip this part.

Part 5: Follow these instructions to report total household income from last month.

Column 1– Name: List the first and last name of **each** person living in your household, related or not (such as grandparents, other relatives, or friends). You must include yourself and all children living with you. Attach another sheet of paper if you need to.

Column 2 – Check if no income: If the person does not have any income, check the box.

Column 3 – Gross income last month and how often it was received. Next to each person's name list each type of income received last month, and how often it was received. For example, *Earnings from work*: List the **gross income** each person earned from work. This is not the same as take-home pay.

Gross income is the amount earned before taxes and other deductions. The amount should be listed on your pay stub, or your boss can tell you. Next to the amount, write how often the person got it (weekly, every other week, twice a month, or monthly). **All other income:** List the amount each person got last month from welfare, child support, alimony, pensions, (second column) pensions, retirement Social Security (third column), and ALL OTHER INCOME SOURCES (fourth column). In the All Other column, include Worker's Compensation, unemployment, strike benefits, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Veteran's benefits (VA benefits), disability benefits, regular contributions from people who do not live in your household, and ANY OTHER INCOME. Report net income for self-owned business, farm, or rental income. Next to the amount, write how often the person got it. If you are in the Military Housing Privatization Initiative do not include this housing allowance.

Part 6: An adult household member must sign the form and list his or her Social Security Number, or mark the box if he or she doesn't have one.

Part 7: Answer this question if you choose to.